



**United States Department of Justice
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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, Dec. 4, 2007

Several men charged in separate indictments for drug possession

There will always be people who attempt to possess and distribute dangerous drugs, but Minnesota's law enforcement remains on the job trying to halt their efforts. Four individuals were recently indicted in federal court on various drug distribution charges.

In one indictment, two St. Paul men and a 23-year-old man from New Mexico were each charged with one count of heroin conspiracy and one count of possession with intent to distribute heroin.

Gilberto Covarribias Beltran, 30, St. Paul; Juan Gracias Sanchez, 23, St. Paul; and Hugo Iram Cardona, Anthony, N.M., were each charged on Dec. 4.

The indictment alleges that on or before Nov. 9, 2007, the three knowingly and intentionally conspired with each other and others both known and unknown to the grand jury to distribute and possess with intent to distribute 100 or more grams of heroin. The indictment also alleges that the three men aided and abetted each other to possess with intent to distribute the heroin.

If convicted on both counts, each of the men face a potential maximum penalty of 80 years in prison. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge.

This case is the result of an investigation by the Drug Enforcement Administration and the police departments of Minneapolis, Roseville and St. Paul, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Andrew Dunne.

Heroin is a highly addictive and dangerous opiate manufactured from morphine, which is extracted from poppy plants.

In a separate indictment, Nedrick Richardo Miller, 25, Chicago, Ill., was charged Nov. 8 with one count of possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine. Miller's indictment alleges that on Oct. 9, 2007, he knowingly and intentionally possessed with intent to distribute approximately 126 grams of crack cocaine.

Cocaine is a powerfully addictive stimulant that directly affects the brain, and crack cocaine is the free-base form of the drug. This form comes in a rock crystal that can be heated and its vapors smoked. The term “crack” refers to the crackling sound heard when it is heated.

If convicted, Miller faces a potential maximum penalty of life imprisonment and a \$4 million fine. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge. This case is the result of an investigation by the DEA, and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Leshia Lee-Dixon.

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An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by the defendant. The defendant, of course, is presumed innocent until he or she pleads guilty or is proven guilty at trial.